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KEZIL  
AND  
OTHER POEMS

EGERTON CLARKE.



*LONDON:*  
STOCKWELL.



# KEZIL

AND

OTHER POEMS .

BY

EGERTON CLARKE.

I V V

LONDON:

ARTHUR H. STOCKWELL,  
29, LUDGATE HILL, E.C. 4.

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## Dedication.

Dear——

To whom one should dedicate a first book is often, I am told, a difficult question to decide.

For my part I can but feel that to offer this, my first to any one particular person would be both ungenerous and unfair, and it is for this reason I am persuaded to offer it, small though its value may be, to all those who have been good to me throughout my life.

So my offering is to you, friends, and among you :

Firstly, my Mother because you are also the mother of these poems ;

Nan, because without you these poems would not have been written by my hand, and because of your care for a stranger-child :

Madeleine, for the sake of your gentleness ;

Dorothy Sayers, in recognition of your kindness, and in appreciation of "Op" ;

Ernest Duggan, because of the door you opened for me ;

Gerald Crow, because you opened my eyes once and for all ; and last but not least——

"Kezil," mysterious inspirer of so much.

EGERTON A. C. CLARKE.

THE GRANGE,  
FOLKESTONE, *June, 1920.*

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## KEZIL.\*

### A FANTASY.

A PERSIAN poet in a garden lay  
From noon till night,  
And watched the shell-pink clouds of day  
Float from out of sight.  
Red flowers, he took, and one by one  
Their petals blew abroad,  
To mix with the dust-red set of sun  
Red to red restored.

He coined new language from gay-plumaged birds  
Of sun-lit wings,  
And mouthing beauty resident in words,  
Mused on coloured things :  
O, Kezil, flowers, the scarlet noon and flames,  
The fair vermilion throng,  
Kezil, flaring torches and strange names  
Of eastern song.—

---

\*"KEZIL" a Persian word meaning "red," or sometimes,  
I believe "the red one."—E.C.

Blood-red, that stain the page of history—  
 He thought thereon,  
 And the red of vesper glory.  
 Night that comes upon  
 The parting kiss, that hurries blushing day ;  
 And night itself a gloom  
 Of scarlet-dimmed, amber lamps at play  
 Within its womb.

Words inventing loveliness, he sang  
 In praise of red,  
 Of Kezil, daughter of the sun, till rang  
 The twilight bells to bed.  
 And sent him sleep and rhyming reverie  
 To blush of dawn.  
 With poems of his body's memory  
 Carved upon the lawn.

There came his lover, Kezil, fair  
 As a lyric grows,  
 Flushed at morning hour ; in her flaming hair  
 Hung a lip-red rose,  
 At her mouth a poppy's peeping head  
 In a field of corn,  
 Like the brown of wall-flower bed  
 Her eyes at morn.

There gravely stalked gay peacocks in her wake ;  
 Of scarlet bill  
 A rare, white bird for beauty's sake  
 From her skirts at will,  
 Pecked the golden crumbs, kissing so  
 The paler hand,  
 And vied with her in paceing slow  
 The rug of sand.

Coffee and peaches and spice she brought  
 To where her lover lay  
 Upon the jewelled carpet sunshine-caught,  
 Dewed at the early day.  
 Breakfast she laid upon the lawn,  
 Proud as any queen,  
 With delicate hands, quick as dawn,  
 And fingers half-unseen.

She spoke ! Her lover thrilled, the poet more  
 Incarnate there—  
 Poems of night and day, and night before  
 In lips and hair.  
 Sun, moon, rose and the torches' red  
 Of his reverie.  
 This the poem that he should wed,  
 And so shall it ever be,—

Lover and poet, ever one  
     Discovering  
 In hair, the moon ; in eyes, the sun ;  
     So understanding,  
 Contour's form and the curve of limbs,  
     Sure harmonic rhyme,  
 Of lyrics carved to the whims  
     Of beat and time.

And the Kezil wed was a poem writ  
     But as yet unread.  
 The coloured, amorous, and not a wit  
     Unmoveing red,  
 But a rosey-mist of changing hue and gleam  
     (Roses, Kezil, blow,  
 And fade, and you may be, are, but a garden dream.  
     The poets know !)

## SHADOWS.

I LOVE tall trees and their green foliage,  
 Beneath whose quiet coolness, undisturbed.  
 I lie and make myself a hermitage,  
 Wherein my singing thoughts go unperturbed.

I love their shadows growing out from dawn,  
 I love them more, and think of them sometimes,  
 As chequered carpets on a stately lawn,  
 Where garden-tea is canopied with limes.

A homely cloth, lace-worked and clean and bright,  
 An earthen tea-pot, Dresden china things,  
 Round coloured cakes and people dressed in white,  
 How strangely these my thoughts to shadow brings,

An umbra of the unforgotten age,  
 Of monster oaks wherein a fairy shook  
 The leaves awhile I lazy turned the page,  
 Grass-stained, of some old, tattered picture-book.

*May, 1920.*

## INVITATION.

COME let us rest, my dear,  
In a shaded place  
Where we can watch the lace  
Of shadow trees and hear  
The simple river sound  
Of waters whispering  
Among the reeds : nothing  
Shall break the peace we found,  
Only the chirping song  
From the musical throat  
Of birds, never a note  
Out of tune all day long ;  
All day long let us lie  
Where Gothic arches loom  
Above, in the green gloom  
Of buttresses that fly  
Over sanctuaries  
In this cool Norman wood,  
Here in the quietude  
Of carven aisles of trees,  
Where human never trod,  
We'll listen to the rhymes,  
The old cathedral chimes  
Of all the bells of God.

FOREST OF DREUX.  
NORMANDY,  
1919.

## WHEN BEAUTY MAKES AN END.

**W**HEN Beauty makes an end,  
 To lip and hair, and changes residence,  
 When nought is left to mend,  
 Its broken house, nor even confidence,  
 In ancient Love, I think that I shall find  
 Your voice, a silver bell  
 In the quiet cathedral of your mind,  
 When nought is left to tell  
 Of Beauty gone, I think that in your brain,  
 Shall Gothic arches go,  
 And tracery along the lovely fane,  
 Once carven long ago,  
 Mosaic aisles of thought,  
 Old English wrought,  
 And images of all  
 That you have loved, in varied attitudes,  
 In niches round the wall,  
 The friends of youth and unforgotten moods,  
 When Beauty makes an end  
 To lip and hair and changes residence,  
 When nought is left to mend  
 Its broken house nor even confidence.

*July, 1920.*

## ENVY.

| SOMETIMES think that we must live  
     Beneath a blue enamelled sky,  
 'Tis Beauty's own prerogative  
     To make of evidence a lie,  
 And send old Truth a' begging round  
     For any seed of loveliness  
 That lies unnurtured on the ground,  
     There fading into prettiness ;

These are the seeds I dare to taste,  
     But nothing more ; the queenly lip  
 And hair and eye may go to waste  
     For all my impotence to sip  
 Within gold cups of Beauty's wine,  
     That proud possession of the Great  
 Who know not passion such as mine  
     Yet have the power to cheat old Fate.

And so I am persuaded, now  
     As yet I am not satisfied,  
 And that for Beauty's sake, and how  
     The things I love are deified,  
 Held far beyond my human reach,  
     For this it is I sometimes go  
 And take for comfort down the beach  
     The sight of decadence ; I know



Old fish are there long petrified,  
 And bones and weed anemones that grew  
 Once lovely in their coloured pride ;  
 The storm-tossed sea no longer blue,  
 Runs, as it were, to kiss my feet,  
 And beg of my kind sympathy ;  
 Beauty, I think, is fickle, fleet,  
 When absent thus is constancy.

A coward comfort so I take,  
 And wonder how I still can walk,  
 And paint, and hear for friendship's sake  
 The empty resonance of talk,  
 When nought is real before the eyes,  
 But phantom books that are not there  
 When well is known the sage and wise  
 Are foolish in the open air.

The grass and trees of tinselled Spring,  
 Of artificial, paper-green  
 Her flowers of which the poets sing  
 They dream of and have never seen,  
 And woman so a statue is  
 Of clay and silk, I think sometimes,  
 And what her glance, or touch, or kiss  
 But stuff whereon to carve out rhymes ?

Ah yet, despite my old belief  
 In Beauty's emptiness, I crave  
 For all that I have not, and grief  
 Makes comfort so her coward slave:  
 In spite of all this make-believe,  
 Contented I would be ; meseems  
 'Tis pity so to long and grieve  
 For things less lovely than my dreams.

*May, 1920.*

## IN THE TRAIN.

**T**I-tum-tity-tum, ti-tum-tity-tum,  
 Beat like a muffled, monotonous drum  
 The wheels of the train, the carriages' joints  
 By telegraph-poles and hedges and points,  
 Lurching and grateing, weeping and swaying,  
 Sits an old woman opposite praying,  
 More eloquent so her whisper and nod,  
 Louder her prayers in the ears of her God,  
 Than this tity-tum, ti-tum-tity-tum,  
 Beat like a muffled, monotonous drum.

*March, 22nd 1920.*

## FIRELIGHT.

**W**HAT is their argument to me  
 Or you or anyone, for haply  
 Time shall be when even I may know  
 Why this is that or so and so,  
 And all they represent ? But now  
 Content am I, and ask not how  
 The moon was kind enough to come  
 And lighten on our coloured home,  
 Wherein your painted cushions make  
 For warmth, and mother-comfort's sake  
 A fitting frame to your brown head,  
 Bent back, set charming wise, where shed  
 Its trailing wisps, on your white skin,  
 And those pomegranates burnt therein,  
 Shadows that, curling faint, desire  
 Dance of the music played by fire  
 Whose glowing embers drop adown  
 To fill the stones that edge your gown  
 With high fantastic lights, a gleam  
 Of tiny eyes, that wink and seem  
 Alive to ev'ry vision there,  
 Behind the grate in cave and lair  
 Deep showing as a poppy's heart ;—  
 But here while smoke-thin elfins dart  
 Quite unconcerned the kettle sings  
 Of charms and runes and English things,  
 Of marmalade, and toast, and tea,  
 Of Queen Victoria, you and me.

## REVERIE.

**A**LONE again, and in these woods,  
 I understand the present lack,  
 Of all the half-remembered moods,  
 Wherein I laboured long years back.

And so I would recall again,  
 And snatch them from their hidden place,  
 Each distinct and separate pain,  
 Some moment's thought and one loved face,

Ambition for that sacred thing,  
 Love's undiscovered grown-up joy,  
 To feel the songs I used to sing,  
 And the hole in a clock-work toy!

Is irretrievable the time,  
 When afternoons meant nurse and walk,  
 And Sunday church the half-hour chime,  
 The dragging hour of whispered talk?

(My talk was not of grown-up tone,  
 I used to think they spoke instead,  
 A mystic language of their own,  
 When I lay safely tucked in bed).

Dear God, these woods are just the same,  
 The adventurous river too;  
 And I, I have not changed my name,  
 And still the Kentish sky is blue!

## VIGIL

ALL night long, without desire,  
Where darkness came and went,  
We watched by the flameless pyre,  
And saw it not ; we spent

Our ritual by the bed,  
Customary vigil kept,  
Yet gave no thought to the dead,  
The impotent hands unwept ;

No sound stirred about your room,  
Nor was any movement there ;  
Only a throb from the gloom  
Where the clock ticked out its prayer.

Each thinking the other's thought,  
No word said, nor gesture made,  
Knowing Convention had bought  
Our silence, we were afraid,

But never a thought we took,  
For the pale and shuttered eyes,  
That lay like a well-read book,  
Closed up by the sleepy wise.

Never a whisper was heard,  
The quiet hours crept on day,  
For lack of the spoken word  
That would break our bonds away.

As prisoners held we sat,  
Lest anything gave offence,  
For the dead have need of that,  
They say, and our reverence ;

All the night long we waited,  
And comfortless held our tryst,  
With that cold thing that was dead,  
And the mouth that gaped unkissed.

Each thinking the other's thought,  
With never a thought for him,  
We knew how Custom had bought  
Our love for a dead man's whim.

## SOIRÉE

**D**OREEN was there and love and you,  
In a blue dress,  
Under the light,  
Near the piano where someone was playing,  
Sonatas, a marvellous picture guess,  
Of all I was praying:—

“ Moonlight and Peace ! Great calm be here,  
Within the home  
And out, blue night  
Hang peaceful-wise like a rich curtain drawn,  
Heavy with jewels and under a dome,  
Hiding the stage of Dawn.”

**“FAIR LILIES, LOVE, I SHALL  
ENTWINE . . .”**

Fair lilies, love, I shall entwine  
     About your cold, unkindly cross,  
 And pour thereon the warmest wine,  
     A last libation to my loss.

And then, dear heart, I'll meditate  
     Upon the thing, deep hidden there,  
 Gold-headed youth and old bald pate,  
     And all, my love, you ever were;

For there, I think your thoughts will be,  
     And dreams and buried so regret  
 The little things of you and me,  
 And, think you, love, that I'll forget,

The youth who never ceased to crave,  
     The man his heart unsatisfied,  
 The wrinkled calm and in one grave  
     All, all, my love, that ever died?



# THE PALACE GARDENS, FONTAINEBLEAU.

## A FANTASY.

*To Mrs. F. S.*

LEAF-DARK the twilight gloom grows deep,  
 To curtain off the sun to sleep,  
 Adown the vista'd aisle of trees,  
 That whisper secrets to the breeze;  
 And like a lamp upon a stand,  
 Over a fir-tree straightly planned,  
 Cupola-like there sits the moon,  
 Where she has journeyed since the noon,  
 Trailing behind her a white robe  
 Of clouds, and now her lighted globe  
 Is dropping pallid tapers round  
 Spears on a needle-covered ground  
 Where cones, as pyramids arise,  
 To shade the stars from goblins' eyes.  
 And Harlequin comes, dancing gay,  
 Along the fading paths of day—  
 To meet his fairy Columbine  
 Across the dappled lawns of green . . .  
 Where kingly fountains silver flow,  
 Mid Royal paths at Fontainebleau;  
 Here marble Bacchantes, gleaming white,  
 Revel to Cupid's vain delight;  
 While sometimes too a ghost is seen  
 Of a long departed king or queen.

De Maintenon, La Pompadour,  
 Take shape from elm or sycamore ;  
 Red-heeled the fifteenth Louis treads  
 About the perfumed dahlia beds,  
 With measured step to find his queen,  
 Who's hiding in the Nicotine  
 While knights and ladies ghostly pass,  
 A satin frou-frou 'cross the grass ;  
 There sad Napoleon weeps his tears,  
 Over the unforgotten years  
 Bidding " adieu " to his troops below  
 The Horse-shoe stairs at Fontainebleau.  
 But Harlequin cares not for these,  
 And speeds his way among the trees . . .  
 All in and out where moonbeams play,  
 Games disconcerting, quaint and gay ;  
 And now and then a whispered word  
 He hears, and now a startled bird—  
 Some hidden lovers weep and kiss  
 Within the moon's cosmopolis ;  
 While deaf to all an elfin throng  
 Is heard a wail drawn out to song,  
 Pierrot is here, and so Pierrette—  
 The two whom all the world forget ;  
 But so to hear that old refrain,  
 There wait the people of his brain.  
 Bright Harlequin, at least, has ears  
 For laughter cooled by music's tears.

*Pierrette sings :*

" Come, Pierrot, softly croon  
 Some plaintive, nocturne air,  
 Under the pale, far moon,  
 Compelling slumbers there,  
 Old fears crowd in to-night,  
 'Tis fain that I would dream  
 That grief had taken flight  
 To where the blue stars gleam.

My dreams have been unkind,  
 And troubled me of late,  
 " Love goes as with the wind "  
 They say : " it's out of date.

Dire dreads possess my heart,  
 Lest we have loved too long ;  
 All lovers so must part,  
 O whence do sorrows throng ? "

*Pierrot :*

" They come from ladies' eyes,  
 And all they understand,  
 From glances, looks and sighs,  
 One touch of one pale hand "—

*(Perriot disappears singing.)*

Which Harlequin considers wrong,  
 So hurries off as dies the song.  
 Half-fearful he, about, along,  
 Runs down the paths of shadow green.  
 Catching glimpses in between

Of naiad revels, elfin rout  
 Hither and thither, in and out,  
 Till caught surprised within a rain  
 Of clematis, he stops again.  
 New sudden wonder fills his eyes  
 There unashamed before him lies  
 A naiad's white-limbed beauty still,  
 Silent in marble, and tranquil.  
 Alone in a chequered glade,  
 Which fairies from the moon have made,  
 Hard, heartless, fickle Harlequin,  
 Forgetting now his Columbine,  
 Sleeps and dreams those limbs can move,  
 A marble residence of love,  
 And life can wake those cheeks to flush,  
 As grapes that make cool water blush,  
 The pale, stone mouth's feigned, softening shows  
 The full-lipped heart of a damask rose ;  
 Till dreaming at last she is at his side,  
 His bosomed Galatea, his bride  
 Soon wretchedly awakes to find  
 That pleasant dreams are yet unkind.  
 His Columbine is wrought in stone,  
 And himself unpitied all alone ;  
 Up to the argent, dawn-lit sky,  
 He laughs, and careless makes reply :  
 " O what care I for Columbine ?  
 When lawns are dressed in morning green,  
 And kingly fountains silver flow,  
 In gardens fair at Fontainebleau."

## ON THE PARIS-EXREUX ROAD.

IN Paris town are streets I know,  
 (What need, my heart, for fear ?)  
 Where trees go marching row on row,  
 There are not any here,

Save only oaks which scarce are trees,  
 To sentinel our way ;  
 And image-burdened calvaries,  
 That speak of yesterday.

Like weeping ladies, willows bend,  
 Grey-hooded nuns at prayer,  
 And where the poplar aisles extend,  
 Are shadowed cloisters there.

And that, my heart, is why we go,  
 Sans wallet, purse or scrip ;  
 To ride where Norman winds may blow,  
 Wi' horse and boot and whip.

Yet night and stars along our track,  
 That silver paint the grass,  
 Do send our thoughts a' swinging back,  
 To stars on Montparnasse.

LES ROCHES,

VERNEUIL.

MARCH 1920.

## ROYAL EXCHANGE.

I SAW a queen at break o' day,  
 Go trippin' down the road,  
 And snatchin' straws upon her way,  
 From ev'ry passin' load.—

"O here's to Fortune sweet," she cried,  
 "A garland for my hair,  
 Hi, lad, you'll take me for a ride,  
 I've kisses I can spare."

So queen and lad went up to town,  
 Along wi' corn and hay,  
 Now you can see her regal gown,  
 On any sort o' day,

And hear her cry in ev'ry street,  
 Come what may the weather,  
 To ev'ry other queen she'll meet,  
 "Penny bunch o' heather.

O heather, white heather for luck,  
 Heather for mi-lady,  
 Gathered some i' the land o' Puck,  
 And some in Arcady!"

HAYMARKET.

1919.

## MAN AND MAID OF KENT.

THE land of Kent is fair I ween,  
     But my love is fairer still,  
 He wears a suit of russet green,  
     And he lives upon the hill,

I whisper things to him at noon,  
     And when the day grows mellow,  
 Or not perhaps till comes the moon,  
     -I kiss the silly fellow,

'Side the rill in Olantigh wood,  
     Or in the hay or stubble,  
 I care not where 'tis understood,  
     I kiss him for his trouble.

I met him once Kemp's corner way,  
     Aside another mistress,  
 And bade her take to heels and play,  
     And sent him 'bout his business.

And so for days he faithful was,  
     Or else was close and wary,  
 I saw him kiss nor dame nor lass,  
     Save only me, his Mary.

So just the same we walk again,  
From Eggerton Hill to Wye,  
And laugh and talk to kill the pain,  
From Chilham to Hastingleigh.\*

Perhaps one day and nothing loath,  
Of other loves grown weary,  
He'll go to church and pledge his oath,  
To take to bed his Mary.

\* *Pronounced 'Hastinglie.'*



## IMPROMPTU.

**T**HIRSTY my hot, slaked throat,  
 I could not sleep last night  
 Because a woman's fair  
 Slumber hovered remote,  
 Untenable delight  
 Out on the shadowed air.  
 I clutched and felt in vain,  
 And yet the ghost of you  
 And words came back to me  
 As people to my brain.  
 Passing, returning through  
 A thronging memory  
 Of things that you had said  
 By look or word ; the road  
 I saw again, the lights  
 Go marching home to bed  
 In vistad rows that glared,  
 Converging in the flights  
 Of multi-coloured gloom ;  
 Where echoed footsteps died,  
 And queer-made trees, and where  
 Fantastic shapes did loom.  
 What silly things I sighed  
 And murmured of your hair.  
 " Lovelier than the stars,  
 Your eyes," old silly things

I said, and yet how true.  
 (What palls when nothing mars  
 The muse of perfect-strings  
 Unsullied by the rue  
 Of insincerity ? )  
 Strange others passed us by,  
 Pitiful lovers they,  
 Who knew not you and me,  
 Nor recognised that I,  
 A king, had passed that way :  
 Nor saw in you a queen.  
 Dear God, I pitied them,  
 Their foolish faces glared.  
 Not one of them had been  
 Worthy to touch the hem  
 Of your garment, nor dared  
 To brush your sovran hand.  
 The while I thought of this,  
 And in my pride I knew  
 Not one would understand  
 The high cosmopolis  
 Where emperors may woo,  
 Where kings had right to give  
 And make poor fools content  
 With beauty not their own.  
 An audience they live  
 Apart, nor yet resent  
 A flaccid lot, the stone

They touch instead of pearls,  
Instead of warm delight  
In queens, grey tepid girls--  
I could not sleep last night,  
The crowded thoughts, the pain  
Of that long walk we had  
Along the path to Rome.  
The pavements, lit from rain,  
Re-echoed, I was glad,  
But could not sleep last night  
Till dreams of you crept home.

*May 5th, 1920.*

FOR. . .  
IN MEMORIAM J.P.D.C.

*2nd Lieut., 10th Worcesters.*

DEAL gently with him now, be proud  
As I, seeing that he is gone  
And stay not with the weeping crowd,  
But steal aside somewhere alone  
With hands unfolded, head unbowed.

Smile too, but not with languid eyes,  
Nor sadly so, he hated grief,  
Be kind because he helpless lies,  
But if tears come, let them be brief  
As he would have these obsequies.

No flowers upon his body set,  
Forget-me-nots nor bitter rue,  
Nor sign, nor token of regret,  
Where once the whitest lilies blew,  
For how could you and I forget ?

## IN HOSPITAL.

## SEMI-CONSCIOUS.

PALE shadows round my head.  
     In whispering conference,

Nurses moved, and one said,

    " B. one-seven-five ref'rence,  
 A. F. discharge," like ghosts,

    They swayed unreal about  
 The room, The Red Cross hosts.

    I wished someone would shout—  
 I wanted so to sleep.

    A cruel " Hush !" " Be quiet."  
 Was all I heard and " creep

    Like mice ;" and " Special diet."  
 Now and then a single word,

    A phrase, against my brain,  
 Insistent beat and stirred

    The quietude to pain,  
 Then somewhere slammed a door.

    One moment echoed deep  
 Along the empty corridor,  
 Outside, I turned and heard no more,  
 And turned again and fell asleep.

WINCHESTER,

1918.

## THE COMEDIENNE.

HALF-FEARFUL, friendless, unbeknown,  
 I went unheeded, swift ; alone,  
 Adown the lighted street.  
 Unrecognised, a thing of nought,  
 Almost of scorn, unloved, unsought,  
 Sped on relentless feet.

None looked, who cared, for what was I,  
 One of a throng, a passer by,  
 One atom of the whole.  
 And here within me who should know,  
 The beat of a heart, an ego,  
 Individual soul ?

One moment, and the lights grew dim  
 Around, I saw white faces swim  
 Along the serried tiers :  
 The Capitol was mine, and Rome  
 Beneath a gilt-emblazoned dome,  
 Where echoes died and—years.

They knew me now, the heedless throng,  
 I held them fast from dance to song  
 They loved, their passion grew—  
 They cheered, hot eyes met mine, they sought,  
 But I was all, and they were nought,  
 The roses, I and rue.

An empress then had bowed to this,  
To build their dream-cosmopolis?—  
Plebeian gods might rave,  
But I who had their hearts in thrall,  
Saw Cæsar crouching in his stall,—  
The fat hands clapped their slave.

*March, 1920.*

## MAGIC.

**A** CROSS the passage a door  
 Throws open an amber patch,  
 Streaked from ceiling to floor,  
 Across the passage a door  
 Sprung out of its intimate latch ;

Half-open it creaks and sways  
 On a threshold's familiar mat,  
 Where lamp and starlight plays,  
 Half-open it creaks and sways  
 And wakes the winking cat.

But see at a glance within  
 Kinder a room is not ;  
 Quaint, comfortable figures grin,  
 And see at a glance within  
 Two legs of a darling's cot.

A glimpse of a carven chair,  
 And a half of the Baby-grand,  
 Two red lights shaded there,  
 A glimpse of a carven chair  
 And brass pot pourri stand.

On half of the mantle-piece,  
 Tall, twisting candle-sticks,  
 Romance in flicker and grease,  
 On half of the mantle-piece,  
 Polishing tiles and bricks ;



A girl on a sofa there  
 In cushions of gold and black,  
 Concealing a long-loved tear,  
 A girl on the sofa there,  
 A marvellous head bent back.

A tiger-skin rug,  
 The print of a foot on its head,  
 The dent where a heel has dug,  
 A tiger-skin rug,  
 The brown and white terrier's bed.

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Then sudden the door closed fast,  
 And a gust of wind blew through,  
 And shuttered my eyes at last,  
 And sudden the door closed fast,  
 The intimate world of you.

But nothing was there at all,  
 And how could I understand,  
 When the morning stripped the wall,  
 And nothing was left at all,  
 But a brass pot pourri stand.

*June, 1920.*

## SIN.

HE dares to say he never sinned,  
That hollow, inquisitive wind.

Why yesterday I saw him blow  
Where other knaves have fear to go,

And all the time a'tearing down  
My costly filigrees of brown;

He tapped the bells to jingle chimes,  
Adown the long arcade of limes;

I saw him turn the grass to weed,  
And puff a flower to dust and seed

And sweep the sky of all its blue,  
A most unseemly thing to do,

With busy hands and curious eyes,  
To bare all earth's fair secrecies,

Urging at last his clouds to rain  
Against my trembling window-pane,

And drop upon the sill a pool  
Of tears, poor penitential fool.

\* \* \*

Ah dare not say you never sinned,  
Mad, inconsequential wind !

## EXCAVATION.

I SAW white-bearded men in Hellas raise,  
 A town long-dead whose columns stood as yet  
 Grey, tall and grand memorials of praise,  
 And temples of the gods we dared forget,

The gods who watched full seven empires die,  
 Their creeds and shrines and all the fertile East  
 Bowed down before the one eternal lie  
 Become the slave of some pale, tonsured priest.

And I was sick and sad for ruined joys,  
 And cried aloud to see unpeopled stones,  
 Until amid the hush came Spartan boys  
 With flashing limbs and clean from ancient bones.

And merry laughter woke again and song  
 From lips embalmed ; within the porticoes  
 Carved statues stood once more amid the throng,  
 And traced their shadows out in classic pose,

Awhile the sun a royal fire sunk down  
 Majestic waved, a flame-lit farewell hand  
 One splendid moment lit behind the town,  
 And darkness fell a pall upon the land.

I knew that Fate would come, as come she must,  
 And walking stedfast hand in hand with God,  
 Commit those honoured stones to pallid dust,  
 And once again the streets where youth had trod.

## FINIS.

*To M. C.*

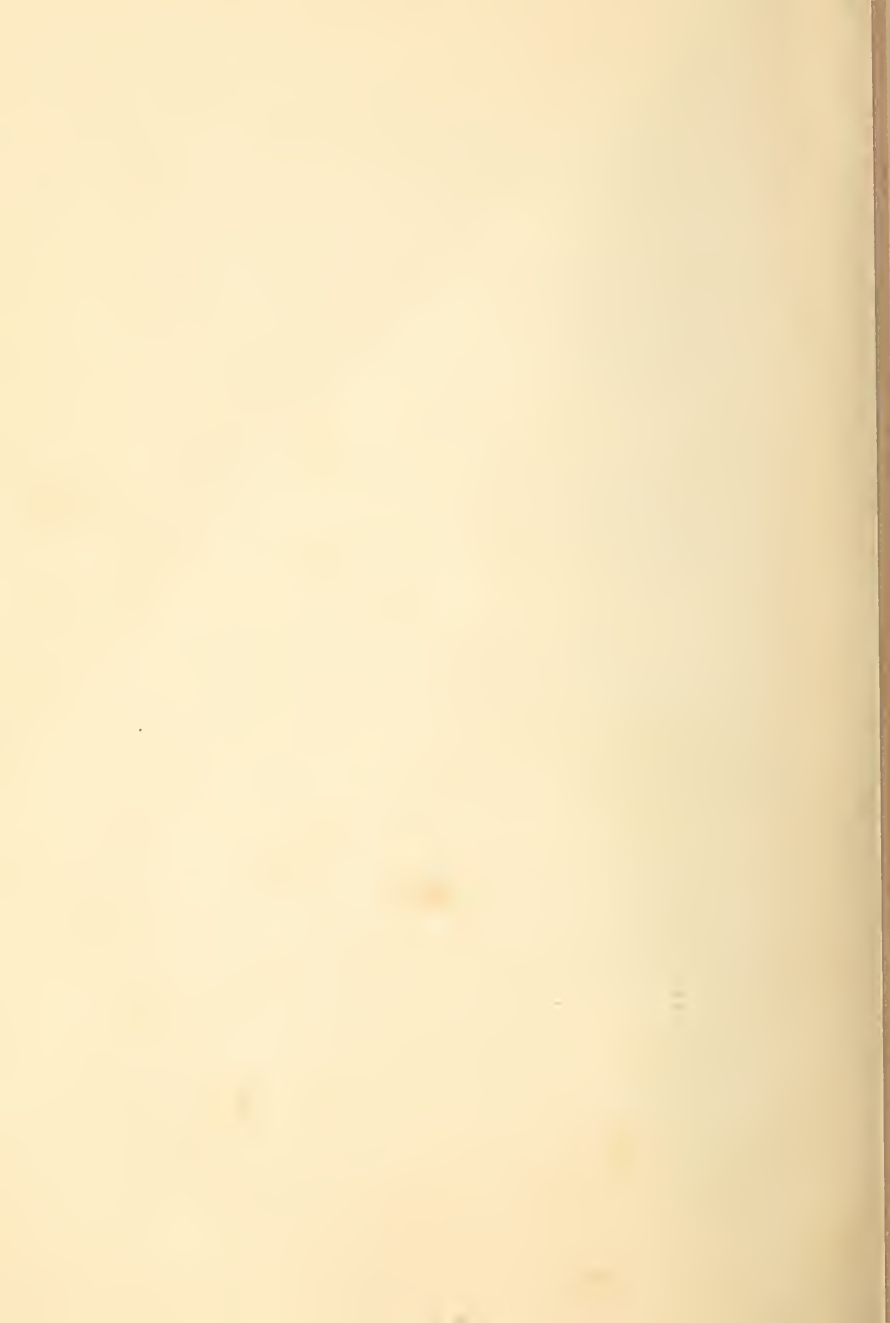
NOT so much pity, what better an end  
 Than a night of shadow and quiet sleep,  
 When there's nothing of love that's left to spend,  
 Why should we linger to fidget and weep ?

O little's the pity of such a kind,  
 Let us light our candle and go upstairs  
 As children do, and dropping down the blind  
 A comfort make wherein to say our prayers ;

Not so tenderly now, no endless kiss,  
 Nor hold my hand so long, now love is pain,  
 But say " sleep well, sweet dreams," and things like  
 this—  
 " Good-night," laugh too, lest Love find fault again,

Pity can go the way of love, and now,  
 As though we had nothing of that to mend,  
 Politely unkissed let us nod and bow,  
 With a " God bless you, dear," and " Good-night,  
 friend."











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